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ABSTRACT

Career education is a comprehensive, educational approach, intent on preparing individuals to live useful and stimulating lives in a society dominated by technical and specialized tasks and mechanisms. The Alabama State Department of Education, realizing the impact and educational implication of such an approach has implemented into its regular program, career oriented concepts. The State's position and implementation scheme are presented in this publication. Beginning in Grade 1 and proceeding through the elementary grades, pupils in Alabama are exposed to tasks which assist them in developing their awareness of self as well as of the world of work. Exploratory experiences are provided at the junior high level while senior high school students are exposed to more sophisticated skills and knowledges geared to college and job preparation. A selected bibliography is included, as are charts depicting various aspects of the program. (SN)

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ALABAMA CAREER EDUCATION

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CAREER EDUCATION



State Department of Education
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

ALABAMA'S STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
POSITION STATEMENT ON CAREER EDUCATION

Career education is a comprehensive educational approach to the preparation of the citizenry for living as fulfilled human beings in a predominately technical, specialized society.

Career education should begin in grade one or earlier and continue throughout the productive life of the individual.

The concept of developmental career education dictates the necessity for a total educational program which is relevant to the world of work and is programmed to provide for the development of an awareness of self and the world of work in elementary students, exploratory experiences for junior high students, and for senior high students, knowledges and skills necessary to pursue further education or to become employed.

Career education is not conceived to replace or to be in addition to any educational programs in existence today. It is intended, however, to make educational subject matter more meaningful and relevant to an individual through restructuring and focusing concepts around a career development theme.

SOME BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CAREER EDUCATION

1. *Career education helps students develop a personal plan for lifelong learning which includes learning about the world they live in, its people, the social and physical environment; learning about the sciences, arts, and literature they have inherited and are creating; and learning about the way in which the world's people are interacting. Career education is designed to equip individuals to live their lives as fulfilled human beings.*
2. *Career education is organized in a pyramid approach, beginning with career awareness in the elementary grades and moving from the general to the more specific orientation to the world of work. In junior high school, students are provided with career or world of work exploratory experiences. These experiences, in turn, provide knowledge and experience to assist the student with career decision-making regarding areas of study and more specific career preparation which the student will pursue in senior high school, post-secondary and adult programs. Guidance and counseling are provided concurrently with classroom instruction and skill development to improve the student's decision-making abilities.*
3. *Careers are studied in relation to fields of work or clusters of related occupations, such as the construction occupations cluster, the health occupations cluster, or*

the fine arts and humanities occupations cluster.

4. Emphasis is placed on using multi-media instructional techniques such as films, filmstrips, transparencies, drawings, models, bulletin boards, displays, demonstrations, and videotapes in order to be more effective with students having a wide range of learning styles and skills. Types of instructional methods and strategies include classroom and laboratory activities, individualized prescribed learning modules, simulation, field observation, in-school skill training, and work experience.
5. All students leaving high school will be prepared for and actively assisted in securing placement in either a job or some form of post-secondary education or a combination of the two, whichever they choose.
6. Career education focuses on the interest, talents, and needs of the individual, and needs of society.
7. Career education provides knowledges, skills, and experiences and develops competencies that enhance employment adaptability.
8. Career education is needed by and intended for all people. It is a people-oriented concept which is responsible to public demand for both relevance and accountability. It is a lifelong process which extends from early childhood through adulthood.
9. The responsibility for career education

belongs to the public education system in partnership with industry, community, and home.

10. *Career education programs provide for a continuous follow-up of all dropouts and graduates and use the resulting information for program revisions.*

SOME BASIC GOALS OF CAREER EDUCATION

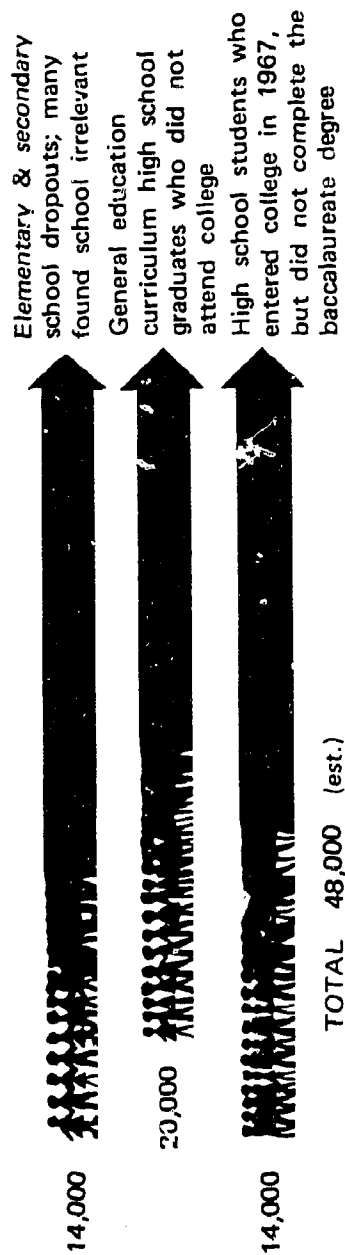
1. *To develop in students positive attitudes about the personal and social significance of work.*
2. *To develop self-awareness through which the individual can relate his personal attributes to the demands and opportunities in career fields.*
3. *To develop and expand the occupational awareness and aspirations of students.*
4. *To help students explore careers in which they are most interested.*
5. *To help students begin to develop specific job skills consistent with individual interest and ability.*
6. *To provide experiences for students to assist them in evaluating their interests, abilities, values, and needs as they relate to occupational roles.*
7. *To improve the performance of the students in basic subject areas by making the*

subject matter more meaningful and relevant through unifying and focusing it around a career development theme.

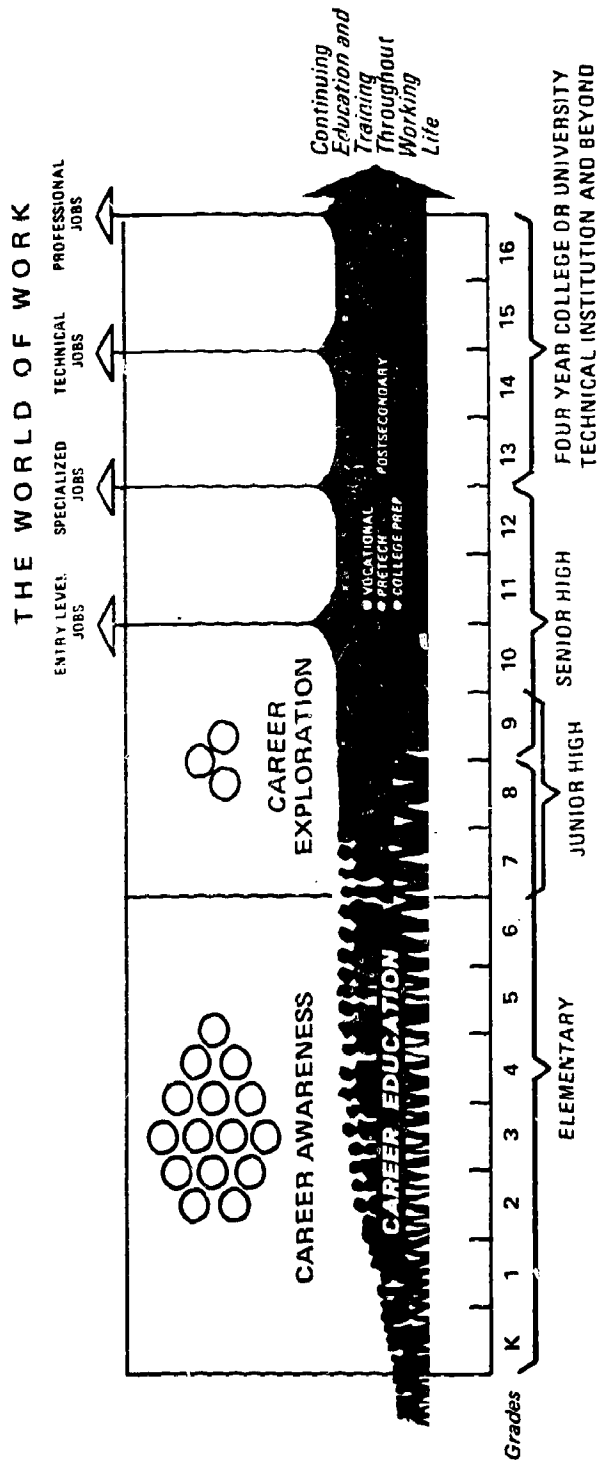
8. To help students develop an understanding of their personal characteristics, preferences, and values, and how to relate these to job skills or requirements.
9. To help students develop the capability of making considered choices of career goals, based upon development of self in relation to range of career options.
10. To help students develop knowledges, skills, competencies and attitudes necessary for entry and success in a career.
11. To increase the student's motivation to learn by relating his studies to the world of work.
12. To provide intensive guidance and counseling in preparation for employment and/or further education.
13. To insure placement of all students, upon leaving school, in either: (1) a job, (2) a post-secondary occupational educational program, or (3) a four-year college program.

THE CHALLENGE

Nearly 48,000 students leave the educational system of Alabama each year without adequate preparation for careers. In 1970 - 71, there were:



A SOLUTION . . .
 An Example of a **CAREER EDUCATION** Model



PHASES OF CAREER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

I. Career Awareness (Grades K-6)

- 1. Students develop a positive self-image.*
- 2. Students become familiar with the many types of occupations and the inter-relationship of occupations in producing and using goods and services.*
- 3. Emphasis is placed on developing positive attitudes, values, appreciations, and understandings of all types of work.*

II. Career Exploration (Grades 7-9)

- 1. Students gain an understanding of the various educational requirements for different occupational levels.*
- 2. Students are aware of the significance of changing and evolving technologies.*
- 3. Students develop an awareness of self including their interests, aptitudes, and values.*
- 4. Students research the educational skill development and worker skill requirements needed for various careers.*
- 5. Students develop positive attitudes for the dignity of work.*
- 6. Students are guided in accepting the responsibility for selecting and planning a career.*

7. Students are given "hands on" experiences with the kinds and levels of work performed in a broad range of industry and occupations for which special skills are required.
8. Students explore a single cluster of their choice in depth and receive practical experience, even start to develop some specific skills in a particular job.

III. Career Preparation (Grades 10-12)

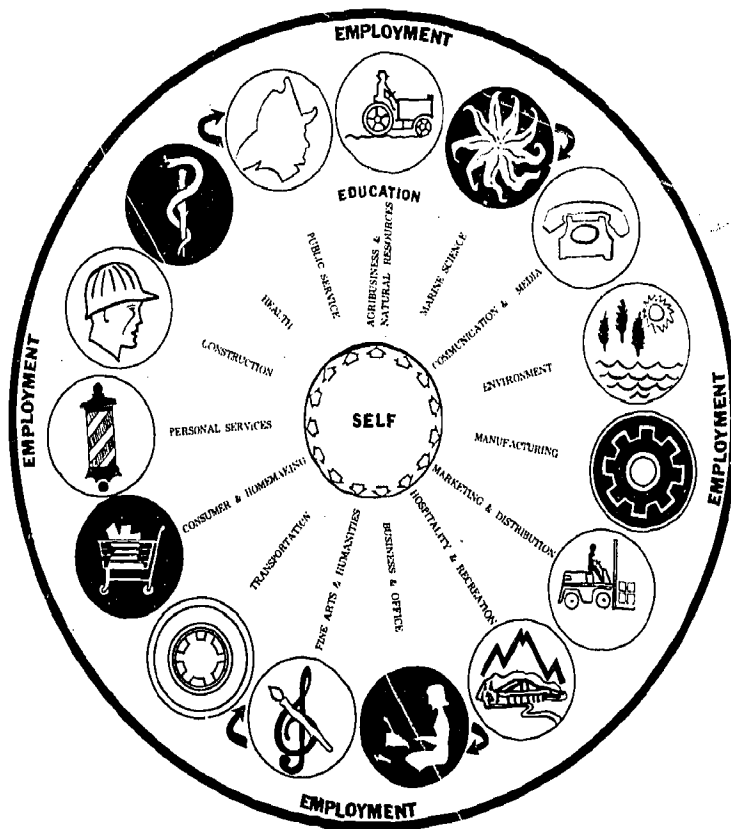
1. Students develop a further understanding of their personal characteristics, preferences, and values, and how to relate these to job skills or requirements.
2. Students develop the capability of making considered choices of career goals, based upon an understanding of self in relation to a wide range of career options.
3. Students acquire knowledges, skills, competencies, and attitudes necessary for entry and success in a career.
4. Students at this educational level could pursue a selected career area more intensely with three options open to them: (1) Acquire job skills necessary for employment as soon as they leave school, (2) Select a combination of academic and job-training courses in preparation for further occupational training at a

post-secondary institution, or
(3) Follow a program directed toward
enrollment in higher education for a
professional degree.

SOME SUGGESTED STEPS FOR CAREER EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION

1. *Organize an "interactive network" of interested individuals and groups--parents, educational personnel, business and labor leaders, elected officials and public agencies, service clubs and other special groups for total community involvement in developing career education.*
2. *Promote an understanding of the concepts of career education and establish appropriate educational objectives.*
3. *Assess the current and future needs for career education in the local school system.*
4. *Inventory and marshal all available community learning resources.*
5. *Design a career education program suitable to the needs of the local school system.*
6. *Gain the cooperation of all necessary organizations, institutions and individuals.*
7. *Fuse the career education program into the curriculum.*
8. *Build in an evaluative process to determine the operational effectiveness of the program.*
9. *Create a feedback system to use evaluation findings to adapt and improve career education programs.*

Career Clusters



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